DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 289 338 EC 201 299

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TITLE A College Guide for LD Service Providers. Position Paper Series: Document No. 12.
INSTITUTION Long Island Univ., Brooklyn, NY.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Apr 87
NOTE 29p.; A part of the Transition Project, Learning How to Learn: A High School/College Linkage Model to Expand Higher Education Opportunities for Learning Disabled Students.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Admission; *College Role; *Delivery Systems; Higher Education; Individualized Instruction; *Learning Disabilities; Mainstreaming; *Services; Student Characteristics
IDENTIFIERS Rehabilitation Act 1973 (Section 504)

ABSTRACT

The paper briefly reviews current issues and concerns facing postsecondary schools that provide services to learning disabled (LD) students. The following topics are discussed: college admissions policies, implications of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, characteristics of LD college students, accommodations to meet their special needs, teaching suggestions for college faculty who have LD students in their classes, and components of a support services program for LD college students. The bulk of the document consists of sample forms (e.g., application forms for student support services) and lists of organizational and print resources. Thirty-three references are also provided. (JW)

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ED289338

A COLLEGE GUIDE FOR LD SERVICE PROVIDERS

Shari Seelig

Long Island University Transition Project
Learning How to Learn: A High School/College Linkage Model
To Expand Higher Education Opportunities for Learning
Disabled Students

This Publication was prepared with funding
support from the Office of Special Education and
Rehabilitative Services
U.S. Department of Education

EC 201 299

Position Paper Series:
Document No. 12
April, 1987

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A COLLEGE GUIDE FOR LD SERVICE PROVIDERS

INTRODUCTION

The special needs of the learning disabled (LD) college student are unique and varied. The necessary college preparatory skills are clear, in that, students need to have adequate written language skills, efficient study skills, appropriate social/interpersonal skills, an understanding of his/her abilities and disabilities, realistic goals, and the motivation to attain a future career goal.

Although many of the nations three thousand colleges and universities are enrolling learning disabled students, only a few schools of higher education have developed appropriate LD programs (Salend, Salend, Yanok, 1985: Vogel, 1982). Of those postsecondary schools that are currently developing such programs, the need for an increased number of trained people to coordinate and provide direct services to the learning disabled college student has become more evident and pressing (Shaw, Norlander, 1986).

This paper will review some current issues and concerns facing postsecondary schools. These issues include: admissions policies, implications of Section 504, the special needs of LD students, accommodations, support services, and the best approaches for meeting the needs of LD college students. Sample forms, organizations, and directories for the LD college student are also included (see Appendix).

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND THE LD STUDENT

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, refers to the "qualified" handicapped student - which has brought to light many concerns and problems for college admissions personnel (Vogel, 1982). One of the problems being faced by postsecondary institutions is the lack of trained learning disabilities services providers (Shaw, Norlander, 1986). Therefore, another concern is that college personnel serving the handicapped on campus may not be able to recognize or identify a learning disability (Stone, 1983). Lastly, trying to avoid legal entanglement, some colleges accept all LD applicants who identify themselves in the admissions process (Vogel, 1982).

These issues relating to the admissions policies have been directly impacted by Section 504, declining enrollment, and the colleges social obligation to serve various handicapped groups (Parks, Antonoff, 1987). Mangrum and Strichart (1984) have identified the key questions that admissions personnel need to ask:

(1) Does the applicant have a learning disability?
(2) Does the applicant have the intellectual ability to do college work?
(3) What knowledge has the applicant acquired?
(4) Can the applicant succeed in college?

According to Vogel (1982), many higher education admissions personnel know very little about learning disabilities and often confuse it with retardation. The admissions personnel rely on interviewing skills to evaluate the LD student's motivation and goal direction in attending college. The admissions standards must not discriminate against LD students and administrators need to identify the types of special services and modifications each student requires. The changes in admissions policies that are currently being evaluated and implemented among colleges vary considerably (Barbaro, 1982).

Although many colleges have not made themselves accessible to the learning disabled, there is a growing awareness and many institutions are in the process of planning, initiating or developing LD college programs and/or appropriate accommodations.

SECTION 504 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

Although Section 504 has been in effect since 1973, its implications are far-reaching and still need to be addressed by many postsecondary institutions. The components that must be reviewed to prevent discriminatory actions have been identified (Putnam, 1984). These include:

> Recruitment activities may not be based on the handicapping condition of a student.
>
> Preadmission inquiries as to an applicant's handicap are prohibited.
>
> Decisions about admission concerning the learning disabled applicant revolve around two important questions: (a) what is the learning disability? and (b) how do admissions personnel determine if an applicant is learning disabled?
>
> LD students cannot be denied admission to any program at an institution with open enrollment.
>
> Admission testing may not make use of any test or criteria for admission that has a discriminatory effect on the LD student.
>
> Adjustments besides admission standards to ensure that academic requirements do not discriminate against a handicapped individual must be implemented.

LEARNING DISABILITIES DEFINED

> "A learning disability (LD) is a disorder which affects the manner in which individuals with normal or above average intelligence take in, retain and express information. Like interference on the radio or a fuzzy TV picture, incoming or outgoing information may become scrambled as it travels between the eye, ear, or skin, and the brain." (University of Wisconsin)

UNDERSTANDING THE LD COLLEGE STUDENT

The LD college student may be charming, have excellent reasoning abilities and a good memory (Smith, 1985). Often, this student will not seek extra help and has developed keen compensatory skills. Typically, the LD student is aware of his/her disabilities and has employed some coping mechanisms which were successful while others do not. Many of these students have high expectations concerning the amount and type of assistance that the school should provide (Blalock, Dixon, 1982). Also, many LD college applicants will withhold identification information in fear that it will be held against them. After a year in college many of these students experience serious academic difficulties and drop out or are asked to leave the school (Vogel, 1982). Most often, the LD student requires supportive help in order to have a successful college experience.

Although the learning disabled adolescent population is heterogeneous, there are two characteristics that all LD students have in common (1) a discrepancy between apparent ability to learn and actual academic performance due to information-processing deficits that impact on components of learning; and, (2) experience of repeated failures which would be expected to reduce their achievement efforts and task motivation. Therefore, the interaction of cognitive and motivational factors always need to be considered when working with the LD student (Seidenberg, 1986).

ACCOMMODATIONS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF LD COLLEGE STUDENTS

To accommodate an LD college student simply means to acknowledge that the student is intellectually capable of higher education, but information-processing difficulties inhibit him/her from learning. Accommodations can involve alternate ways to complete course work, innovative classroom techniques, supervised tutoring sessions, or use of technological machinery. The process of learning, receiving and demonstrating information learned is not accomplished by course content changes or lowering academic standards, but rather in accommodations for learning disabilities.

Awareness for college professors starts with the knowledge of the nature of the learning disability and the accommodations and support services necessary for the LD students to help themselves. It also means becoming aware of certain teaching habits and professorial attitudes that may increase or decrease the learning process for the LD student.

The following accommodations within the classroom setting may satisfy some of the special needs of the LD student. The accommodations need to be based on the nature of the academic difficulties and the suggestions provided by a support services provider. These accommodations must always be agreed to by the faculty member in whose class the student is enrolled.

(1) students may dictate answers to an essay examination if this is the best way to demonstrate what he/she has learned

(2) students may use untimed, special locations for test-taking with supervision

(3) students may tape a class lecture or lesson

(4) students may use calculators when a math deficit is best accommodated by this type of aid

SUGGESTIONS FOR COLLEGE FACULTY

When an LD student is enrolled in your class, it is important to encourage that student to use the support services available on campus. It is also helpful to understand the student's learning difficulties by communicating directly with the student and with support personnel. In addition, the following practices are suggested (Wren & Siegel, 1985; Goodey, 1980-1983) which will be of help to all your students. The goal is to enable the LD student to function more independently and with more efficiency.

- During one of the first classes, have students write a short paper (1 or 2 pages) telling where they are from, their educational experience and what their goals are in attending college. Read this paper for information and writing organization rather than for grammar or spelling.
- Provide a clear, detailed syllabus which states an explanation of expectations, selected topics and procedures for each class session. Underline assignment titles, list criteria alphabetically and include a calendar with assignments indicated.
- Emphasize new and/or technical vocabulary. Present new vocabulary on the chalkboard in class and on a handout.
- Structure each session with a review of material from the last class session and an outline of current material. At the end of each class, summarize important points.
- Offer study questions that indicate the relative importance of content as well as the format of possible test questions.
- Structure the class so that all students must participate or are asked to become more involved in the learning process.
- Present materials in a variety of ways. Some students benefit more by seeing the term or having new concepts approached through more than one modality. This may involve listening to new material, saying, writing or demonstrating.
- Students may sit wherever they choose, but certain students should be encouraged to sit closer to the front of the class. This helps the student with difficulty in concentrating and distractability.
- For large class situations - small group activities led by advanced students may enhance the LD student's understanding of class/text material and interpersonal skills.
- In class lectures and demonstrations try to use concrete examples, dramatic attention-getting devices and practical applications to highlight important information.

A SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM

In order to assist an LD college student, the support services provided must be well planned and structured. This support can help the student have a successful college experience. A thorough educational assessment plan and effective implementation comes from an understanding of the LD student's strengths and weaknesses in acquiring knowledge. And yet, diagnostic workups are usually limited to basic IQ and achievement measures (Cordoni, 1982).

Due to the increased number of LD college students there is a dire need for trained personnel to develop, implement and evaluate college programs (Shaw, Norlander, 1986). It is critical for key personnel to have competence in the diagnosis of a learning disability and program planning (Shaw, McGuire, 1986).

Once a student has been clearly assessed and is willing to put forth the effort and extra time to help him/herself, it is then the role of the support services program to provide direct services to meet the individual needs of the LD student. Almost all LD college programs provide tutoring services for LD students (Cordoni, 1982). The key components to a successful program include:

(1) Establishing an open and honest advocacy relationship between the service provider and student.

(2) Focusing on specific instructional practices that further acquisition and generalization.

(3) Ensuring that all pre-requisite skills have been mastered before proceeding with new material.

(4) Providing sufficient practice and review of new concepts, principles, and information.

(5) Designing and practicing appropriate learning strategies.

(6) Encouraging participation in counseling sessions to deal with social/emotional concerns, when appropriate.

(7) Encouraging self-advocacy and independence in the learning environment.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE FORMS USED WITH LD COLLEGE STUDENTS

Support Service Description Sheet

Program Questionnaire

Student Referral Form

Request For Support Services

Application For Support Services (two samples given)

Letter To The Faculty

Teacher Correspondence: initial enrollment in class monitoring letter

Student Self-Evaluation: Mid-Semester

Tutoring Experience Evaluation

Tutor/Tutee Interaction Form

SUPPORT SERVICE DESCRIPTION SHEET

NAME OF COLLEGE

DIRECTOR/CONTACT PERSON

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT COLLEGE

-private or state institution
-enrollment
-tuition
-room and board

SPECIAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

-enrollment in special program courses
-cost

STAFF

-certified learning disabilities specialists
-special counselors

PROGRAM FEATURES

-individual tutoring sessions
-limited course load (first year)
-basic study skills courses
-small group tutoring sessions
-oral and untimed testing
-taped texts
-student/faculty ratio
-tape recorders
-computers, word processing access

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

-documentation of learning disabilities
-testing assessment information, SAT, untimed accepted
-teacher evaluations
-personal interview
-handwritten essay
-motivation
-summer program

STUDENT REFERRAL FORM

SPECIAL ACADEMIC SERVICES

Student's Name_____ Date_____

Semester _____ Course Title _____

Student's strengths as you see them in your course:_____

_____

Student's weaknesses as you see them in your course: _____

_____

Suggestions to help this student meet course requirements:

___ Private tutoring
___ Group Sessions
___ Individual work on programmed material
___ Work in basic writing skills
___ Work in basic reading skills
___ Work in note-taking skills
___ Other

Signature_____

FOR SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM USE ONLY

Date_____

Student's comments from intake: _____

_____

Staff Comments/Suggestions: _____

_____

Areas of Remediation: _____

_____

_____

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT SERVICES

COLLEGE SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

STUDENT NAME_____DATE _____

I.D. NUMBER_____MAJOR/INTEREST_____

REFERRAL SOURCE _____

Please specify the characteristics specific to the student, which may be of help in setting up an individualized program, at the support services department.

READING SKILLS

___1. student is unable to comprehend textbook reading material

___2. student is unable to find main points or relationships between main idea and supporting details

___3. student's reading rate is inhibiting progress overall

___4. student has difficulty integrating new vocabulary and information in course of study

WRITTEN LANGUAGE

___1. student displays persistent spelling errors; transposition, omissions or substitutions

___2. compositions are limited in length, sentence structure and/or logical cohesiveness

___3. written assignments are not handed in or always handed in late

STUDY SKILLS

___1. student displays difficulty taking notes, outlining or organizing information

___2. student lacks organizational and time-management skills

___3. student rarely uses supplementary materials, such as dictionaries, thesaurus, etc.

APPLICATION FOR SUPPORT SERVICES

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

1. Name_____Date_____
2. Address_____

   _____zip_____
3. Telephone ( )_____
4. Semester you wish to begin _____19_____

SCHOOLING

1. Do you have any previous college experience? ___yes ___no

   If yes, which college _____
2. What high school did you attend last?_____
3. List your high school address _____

   _____
4. High school average _____
5. S.A.T. scores:

DATE	VERBAL	MATHEMATICS	SPECIAL TESTING PROVISIONS

NATURE OF LEARNING DISABILITY

1. Have you ever been diagnosed as having learning disabilities:

   ___yes ___no

   If yes, please complete the following:

   Diagnostician's name _____

   Date of diagnosis_____

   Please include a copy of this report.

APPLICATION FORM

SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Applicant's name _____

1. Did your school district's Committee on the Handicapped (COH) state that you have learning disabilities? _____yes _____no

   If so, when _____

2. Have you received any additional instruction for your learning disabilities? _____yes _____no

   If yes, please complete

   ___ Reading Teacher

   ___ Resource Room Teacher

   ___ Mathematics Teacher

   ___ Writing Teacher

   ___ Speech/Language Therapist

   ___ Psychologist

   ___ Other (please list)

3. Have you received any other services or modifications for your learning disability? _____yes _____no

   If yes, please complete:

   ___ Recorded textbooks

   ___ Taped lectures

   ___ Person to take notes for you

   ___ Untimes tests

   ___ Written assignments which you have dictated

   ___ Other (please list)

LETTER TO THE FACULTY

Our Special Educational Services Program serves the disabled population in a number of ways. We provide supportive academic, vocational and emotional counseling to students with learning disabilities on campus. There is a good possibility that these students will be enrolled in your courses during the academic year.

We encourage you to handle all matters directly with the students. However, if you would like assistance or should have any suggestions as to how our program might better support the special needs of these students, please feel free to call us.

Director of the Program -

Academic Counselor -

Tutorial Supervisor -

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

ONLY A SUGGESTION: We would encourage you to state at the bottom of your syllabus, and to announce at an early meeting of each of your classes, something to this effect:

> If there is any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation for any type of disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours.

This approach will preserve the student's privacy and indicate your willingness to provide assistance.

TEACHER CORRESPONDENCE: INITIAL ENROLLMENT

SUPPORT SERVICE PROGRAM

Date _____

Dear _____,

_____is enrolled in your _____course.

This student requires support services while attending our college. Your cooperation and assistance are an essential part of our efforts to make the entire college program a successful one.

SPECIAL ACADEMIC NEEDS:

1. _____The student would benefit from the use of a tape recorder in class.
2. _____The student would befefit from the use of a note taker in class.
3. _____The student would benefit from the use of taped textbooks. Please send us the course book list.
4. _____The student would benefit from special testing measures:
   - ____ additional time to take exams
   - ____ untimed exams
   - ____ someone to read exams and record answer for student
   - ____ oral exams
   - ____ someone to type/handwrite essays after student has written or dictated the information
5. _____Specifics _____

   _____

   _____
6. _____Individualized tutoring_____

   _____
7. _____Would you please send us an academic progress report mid-semester?

If you have any questions or problems, please do not hesitate to contact this office. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Student Signature_____

TEACHER CORRESPONDENCE: MONITORING LETTER

SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM

STUDENT NAME_____ SEMESTER_____

INSTRUCTOR'NAME_____ COURSE NO._____

Dear Instructor:

In order to adequately monitor students in the Support Services Program your cooperation in completing this form is greatly needed. Please check the appropriate boxes and write any additional information or comments that may be helpful. Evaluation forms will be discussed with students in the Support Services Program.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Support Services Program

Classroom participation:

____student is an active learner (volunteers, discusses readily, attends)

____student rarely participates (answers when called upon or prompted)

____student is unattentive, distracted easily and seems unaware of topic

Student - Teacher Consultation:

____Frequent ____Seldom ____Never

Absences:

____none ____1-3 ____4-6 ____more than 7

Is tutorial assistance recommended?

____yes ____no

Examination Grade(s), to date:

____A ____B ____C ____D ____P ____F

General Comments:

_____

_____

DATE _____ SIGNATURE _____

STUDENT SELF EVALUATION: MID-SEMESTER

At this point in the semester, you (the student) should be interested in finding out how you are progressing in each of your classes. Ask yourself the following questions for each course you are taking:

(1) Do I know how well I am doing in this course? (Circle one)

Don't know Know somewhat Know very well

(2) How will my teacher determine my final grade? Check the ways your instructor will grade you.

tests _____
short quizzes _____
term paper _____
class participation _____
final exam _____
attendance _____

(3) What is my average in this class up to this point? _____pass/fail

(4) Have I participated in this class? (Circle one)

Never Occasionally Often

(5) Do I have a term paper? _____ When is it due _____

Have I talked to my tutor about it? _____

(6) Have I handed in all of my assignments? _____ If not, can I hand them in late? _____ Have I talked to the instructor about this problem?_____

(7) Have I fallen behind in class? _____ How? _____(assignments, make-up test, reading)

(8) Have I talked to the instructor about my problem?_____

TUTORING EXPERIENCE EVALUATION

SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM

In the course of study, we hope that you have benefitted greatly by the services this program has provided. We are interested in learning from the students who have been tutored by a student tutor what their reaction to the tutoring experience has been. Please answer the following questions in the space provided.

1. Who was/were your tutor(s)?_____
2. In what subject(s) did you receive tutoring?_____
   _____
3. Did the tutoring sessions help you to pass the course? Yes___ No___
4. How were you helped?_____
   _____
5. Did you attend your tutoring session regularly and on time?
   Yes_____ No_____
6. Was your tutor on time to the tutoring sessions? Yes ____ No ____
7. Were you prepared with textbook, pencil and assignment? Yes___ No___
8. Will you use the tutoring services again if you need help with a course? Yes ___ No ___

COMMENTS:_____

_____

_____

_____

Today's date: _____

Your ID Number: _____

TUTOR/TUTEE INTERACTION FORM

SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM

Tutor: _____ Date: _____

Tutee: _____ Subject: _____

	YES	NO
1. Is the student (tutee) adequately prepared in terms of assigned reading?	___	___
2. Does the student show progress in the area of note-taking skills?	___	___
3. Does the student seem aware ot time scheduling and deadlines?	___	___
4. Can the student "highlight" or identify important information?	___	___
5. Do you feel that the tutee is in danger of receiving an unsatisfactory grade?	___	___
6. Are you fully satisfied with the progress the tutee is making in the tutorial sessions?	___	___

7. How much time did you and the tutee spend together? This week: _____ (hours) Month: _____

8. Please comment on the effort and motivation that the student appears to have regarding this subject.

_____

_____

_____

_____

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INFORMATION CENTERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, Inc.
275 Avenue of the Americas, Room 2203
New York, New York 10001

American College Test Administration
2255 N. Dubuque Road, P.O. Box 168
Iowa City, Iowa 52243

An Association For Children And Adults With Learning Disabilities (ACLD)
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15234

Association of Handicapped Student Services Programs in Post-Secondary Education (AHSSPPE)
P. O. Box 21192
Columbus, Ohio 43221

Association of Learning Disabled Adults
P. O. Box 9722
Washington, D. C. 20016

AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute
815 16th Street, N.W., Room 405
Washington, D. C. 20006

Closer Look/Parent's Campaign for Handicapped Children and Youth
1201 16th Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091-1589

Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD)
9013 W. Brooke Drive
Overland Park, Kansas 66212

Disability Information Center
University of Southern Maine
246 Deering Avenue
Portland, Maine 04102

Educational Testing Services
Services for Handicapped Students
Princeton, New Jersey 08544

Foundation For Children With Learning Disabilities (FCLD)
99 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10016

HEATH Resource Center (Higher Education And The Handicapped)
One Dupont Circle, N.W., Suite 670
Washington, D. C. 20036-1193

Learning Disabilities Hotline
817 Broadway - 6th Floor
New York, New York 10003
(212) 677-3838

National ASsociation for Students with Handicaps (NASH)
1430 G Street, S.E.
Washington, D. C. 20003

National Information Center for Handicapped Children and Youth (NICHCY)
P. O. Box 1492
Washington D. C. 20013

National Network of Learning Disabled Adults
P. O. Box Z, East Texas Station
Commerce, Texas 75428-1938

National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC)
The Catholic University of America
4407 Eighth Street, N.E.
Washington, D. C. 20017

New York Association for the Learning Disabled
155 Washington Avenue, 3rd floor
Albany, New York 12210

The Orton Dyslexia Society
724 York Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21204

Parent Information Center
P. O. Box 1422
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

People To People Committee for the Handicapped
1025 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped
1111 20th Street, N.W., Room 600
Washington, D. C. 20036

U.' S. Department of Education
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSE)
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20202

DIRECTORIES FOR COLLEGE BOUND LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

BOSC Directory for Facilities for Learning Disabled
Information: program for learning disabled 3-21.List of postsecondary program and agencies serving learning disabled student to age 21.
Cost: $20.00 plus $2.00 for shipping.
Address: BOSC
Dept. F Box 305
Congers, N.Y. 10920

Colleges/Universities That Accept Students with Learning Disabilities
Information: List of colleges by State
Cost: $3.00 (prepaid)
Address: ACALD
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15234
Phone: (412) 341-1515

Directory of College Facilities and Services for the Disabled
Information: list of facilities, services, terrain, aids, number of students,degrees and contact persons.
Cost: $95.00
Address: Oryx Press
2214 North Central at Encanto
Phoenix, Az. 85004-1483

A Guide to Postsecondary Educational Opportunties for the Learning Disabled
Information: List colleges by programs and special labs.
Cost: $12.00
Address: Time Out to Enjoy
715 Lake Street,
Suite 100
Oak Park, Il 60301

Lovejoy's College Guide for the Learning Disabled
Information: lists college by states. Annotations include admissions requirements, support services and academic requirements.
Cost: $10.95
Address: Simon & Schuster Publishers
Attention Order Department
1230 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N.Y. 10020

A National Directory of Four Year Colleges, Two Year Colleges and Post High School Training Programs for Young People with Learning Disabilities.
Information: Colleges and Universities by state.
Also includes non-college programs.
Cost: $15.95 (plus $1.00 for postage)
Address: Partners in Publishing
Box 50347
Tulsa, Ok. 74150
Phone: (918) 584-5906

Peterson's Guide to College with Programs for Learning Disabled Students.
Information: 250 college and Universities page size information for quick reference.
Cost: $13.95 (plus $2.00 for postage)
Address: Peterson's Guide Department
5710, 166 Bunn Drive
P.O. Box 2123
Princeton, NJ 08540-0008

The FCLD Learning Disabilities Resources Guides: A State by State Directory of Special Programs, Schools, and Services.
Information: Quick refernence guide listed state by state.
Cost: $5.00
Address: Foundation for Children with Learning Disabilities
Box 2929
Grand Central Station
New York, N.Y. 10163